

Total Shoulder Replacement – Rehabilitation



This document has been prepared as a guideline to assist you and your physiotherapist through the rehabilitation process after your shoulder replacement. Every patient's recovery is different and your program will be fine tuned to match your progress and specific requirements. Please discuss any concerns directly with your physiotherapist or surgeon.

PHASE	WEEK	GOALS	INSTRUCTIONS
PHASE 1 PROTECT REPAIR & PREVENT STIFFNESS	Weeks 0-2	Pain control Protect repair	Sling for first 6 weeks Analgesia Physio education Pendular shoulder exercises, elbow/wrist/hand exercises
	Weeks 2-6	Protect repairs Prevent stiffness FF up to 90-120 ER up to 20-30	Sling for first 6 weeks Graduated supine PROM and AAROM (FF, ER/IR) - do not force, AVOID resisted exercises Shoulder shrugs and scapular retraction Start hydrotherapy once wounds healed
PHASE 2 INCREASE ROM	Weeks 6-8	AAROM -FF 120, ABD 90, ER 20 -IR (LS junction)	Wear sling AAROM exercises (wall walking, pulleys, stick exercises) Continue hydrotherapy
PHASE 3 STRENGTHENING & CONDITIONING	Months 3-4	Confirm tuberosity union on XR Achieve functional ROM Continue strengthening	Progressive cuff and peri-scapular conditioning - progressive resistance exercises (Theraband +/- gym) Unrestricted cardio fitness exercises
	Months 4-6	Maintain ROM Advance strength and conditioning	Increased resistance exercises
PHASE 4 RETURN TO UNRESTRICTED ACTIVITY	Months 6+	Return to all 'sensible' activities	Sensible activities as tolerated (see table) Continue previous exercises (increasing resistance) Avoid heavy lifting away from body (lifelong)

Below is a table outlining the expected return to various activities following total shoulder replacement. Again, every patient's recovery is different and it is always safest to check with your physiotherapist or surgeon prior to commencing any activity to ensure your rehab has progressed to the appropriate level.

EXPECTED RETURN TO OCCUPATIONAL & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES		
COMPUTER/DESK WORK	2 weeks	Can come out of sling when sitting at desk but re-apply at all other times
EXERCISE BIKE	4 weeks (in sling) 6 weeks (out of sling)	Wean sling AAROM exercises (wall walking, pulleys, stick exercises) Continue hydrotherapy
DRIVING	6 weeks	Out of sling Only once confident and comfortable
RUNNING	8 weeks	Avoid high risk of falling
GARDENING	12 weeks (below shoulder height) 4-6 months (overhead)	Liaise with physiotherapist
ROAD BIKE	4-6 months	Avoid high risk of falling
GOLF	4 months (chipping/putting) 6 months ('full' swing)	Graduated return Liaise with doctor/physio
GYM	6 months	Some lifelong weight/exercise restrictions apply (see physiotherapist)
HEAVY LIFTING/MANUAL LABOUR	6 months (below shoulder height)	Some lifelong weight/exercise restrictions apply (see physiotherapist)
TENNIS	6 months	With restrictions, may not be realistic (see physiotherapist)

NOTES:
